



Mural
...from front page



evenings: “The kids were given the wet clay on a little board,” said Turin. “I have gazillions of texture tools, like a wheel that came off a toy, along with shells, beads, and other things that kids could press into the clay. We put on the colored glazes that night.” After the first firing, Turin and her long-term volunteers, mother-in-law Anna Robinson (a young 82) and retired programmer Linda Pratt, used a clear glaze as a sealer and fired the fish again. Kids painted the big tiles at school or at home with their families. The Kensington Education Foundation paid for the materials and recouped some money through tile sales.

“We had tons of parent help with the installation,” Turin said. “We used mastic to glue the tiles on. Then they had to be grouted and sealed.”

The district also helped with the project. “It was a process,” Turin explained. “We had to make sure that the wall could take that weight. Also, that wall was very weathered. First the district’s painting department prepped and painted it. Then

we attached the tiles, but we were trying to squeeze work sessions in between the rains. You shouldn’t expose your mastic or grout to rains, so we hung tarps with tape. Then the tape tore the paint, so it had to be painted again.” Turin laughed. “The district was really very nice.” She also lauded parent Steven Chan. “He organized the parent volunteers, which is like herding cats. People have soccer and lessons and then they get sick. Steven is a calm person who stays very even-keeled. I have the highest regard for him.”

Turin is thrilled that Kensington’s parents and the KEF can fund her three-day week at the school. “With Prop. 13, it’s such a rarity to have an art position. I love working with children and art. Sometimes mistakes can be the best thing about the whole piece of art. That happens in life too.”



Winoka Turin hard at work on Kensington Elementary’s new mural; Anna Robinson in background. All photos by Kari Tindol.

Undergrounding Forum Popular

On April 20, the Kensington Property Owners Association and the Kensington Improvement Club sponsored a forum, which attracted about eighty residents, on undergrounding utility wires. Rocco Colicchia of Harris and Associates, Mary Halle from the county’s Public Works Department, and Supervisor John Gioia spoke.

Communities underground wires for aesthetics and safety, to minimize hazards from downed wires and eliminate outages. The cost per household in Kensington would depend on frontage, access, and more, but in comparable neighborhoods costs recently spanned \$45,000-\$60,000 per parcel, according to public works.

Undergrounding projects can be initiated for one street, multiple streets (with a cost-benefit minimum of about 100 properties), or the entire community by forming an assessment district with the county, if agreed upon by 60 percent of parcel owners. Once created, all parcel owners in that district pay the costs of undergrounding, levied by assessments over 15-25 years. Costs are paid in advance through the issuance of a county bond.

No funding is available from the state, county, or FEMA. Speakers emphasized the importance of polling property owners to determine interest before initiating a district. An audio recording of the forum will be available. For more, contact Mary Halle (mhall@pw.cccounty.us) or Rocco Colicchia (rocco.colicchia@weareharris.com).



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New Mural a Sight to Sea

By Linnea Due

Educational enrichment means more than opening students’ minds—it can also beautify their environment. Over a year ago, a group of parents decided to put up a mural on the south-facing wall of Kensington Hilltop Elementary. Organized by the Kensington Education Foundation, which sponsors fund-raising events to pay for enrichment programs such as art and music, the mural uses tiles created by students and parents. The lower tiles were sold to donors, while the fish tiles that form the upper portion of the mural were free (though people could contribute to those as well).

“We didn’t know how large the mural would be,” said Kensington Elementary art teacher Winoka Turin. The size depended upon the number of large tiles—and it turns out that generous donors allowed the mural to expand to five panels.

Students make dishes in the shape of a fish in Turin’s art classes, so the fish theme was a natural. Turin used kids’ drawings to create a template for two different fish shapes that produced over 200 fish. The fish were decorated on two

[See Mural, back page](#)

Traffic Stop Fallout, MOU Adopted

By Linnea Due

In a letter dated April 5, Interim Police Chief Kevin Hart informed KPPCSD Director Vanessa Cordova of the disposition of her citizen complaint against Sergeant Keith Barrow following the October 7 traffic stop. Of five allegations against Sergeant Barrow, three were sustained by Chief Hart’s review: that Barrow was riding with an on-duty officer without approval from the shift sergeant and that he participated in a non-emergency law enforcement activity; that he was neither wearing a uniform nor appropriate civilian attire; and that as a supervisor, he failed to ensure that Officer Juan Ramos adhered to the policy and procedures of the department. Two other allegations were judged unfounded: that the traffic stop was unlawful and that Barrow had harassed Cordova. Hart said in the letter that the final review of allegations against Officer Ramos (now on paid administrative leave) was still pending.

On April 12, Justin E. Buffington, attorney for the Kensington Police Officers’ Association and his firm, Rains Lucia Stern, PC, issued a lengthy press release headlined “Kensington Sergeant Exonerated After Investigation of Claim of Traffic Stop.” The press release said that Cordova was unlawfully operating her vehicle because the moving permits were invalid. Buffington continued, “These types of temporary, one-day moving permits are often the subject of fraud by those who use

[see Traffic Stop, page 3](#)

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Letters to the editor

Fear of the “Other” No Model to Follow
To the Editor:

When you look at arguments advanced for a locally controlled PD, some appeal to logic and reason and some to naked fear. Among the latter is one from a recent KPPCSD director: “We are situated between two fairly high crime areas, and have great safety in Kensington, due in large part to our police department.”

For sure, there are hotspots in neighboring cities, but for sure these aren’t in the residential areas immediately surrounding us, as anyone can see for themselves by stepping across the border. Hopefully our vaunted education/intelligence will trump the “fear of the other” exploited so effectively nationally.

Bill Benson

Appreciating Our Firefighters
Dear Editor:

May 4 is Firefighter Appreciation Day. Please join me in thanking our firefighters and emergency medical technicians for all they do—including responding to medical and household emergencies, fire prevention and suppression, first aid and CPR training, emergency preparedness training, installation of child car seats, and safely disposing of unwanted medications. I will drop off a box of candy on Wednesday at the fire station. I hope you will stop by or send a card.

Janice Kosel

Vote of Thanks
Dear editor,

I would like to thank our fantastic Kensington Police Department for years of intelligent and compassionate police work. Our officers not only work to uphold the law for our community but also encourage and support families.

I feel very thankful to have consulted with Officers Hull, Ramos and Stegman over the years in various situations that needed their expertise. These officers were incredibly kind, wise and helpful. I feel very grateful to live in Kensington and have such a fine police department.

Barbara Pedersen

We Can Do Better
Dear Editor,

Jim Watt’s MOU analysis in last month’s *Outlook* was extremely informative and compelling. I have learned over the past year or so that Jim conducts impeccable, highly analytical research that looks beyond the superficial and simplistic answers for comparisons. Regarding the MOU, for him it is not just about what steps are being taken in different towns, but he reviews other aspects of the compensation package to arrive at long- and short-term budget impacts. He is a wise ole bird!

There was one area that Jim commented on that I take issue with—his comment on the GM/COP, which he is not sure whether we need to separate. As we know, to separate the positions would be costly—two positions, two benefits, and something has to be given up to pay for it. But just looking at the numbers is shortsighted in my view. And to assume that a volunteer board will always get it right in giving direction is also problematic.

The key element in establishing good governance is to have ethical, impartial professionals governing who promote transparency in action. This cannot be minimized in any way, as lacking it is clearly what has brought major underlying, unseen problems to Kensington for many years, going back three or four police chiefs (Garfield, Harman, Hart at minimum).

See page 3

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The Kensington Community Council is dedicated to the improvement, development, and education of the community, and to the promotion of social welfare in Kensington. It enriches the community by providing educational and recreational programs for all ages and by publishing the Outlook, a monthly newsletter that covers local events and issues.

KCC also provides a forum for all Kensington community groups to meet and coordinate their respective efforts toward the common good of the community.

The opinions expressed in Letters to the Editor are those of the contributors, and do not necessarily represent the opinion of the Outlook, its editor, or the publisher, the Kensington Community Council. Residents are invited to submit letters on matters of interest to the community. Letters must be signed and include the author's address and phone number (address and phone will not be published). Publication is subject to space limitations and the editor's discretion. Letters of 250 or fewer words are preferred. One letter per person, per issue. Obituaries for Kensington residents are published at no charge. E-mail preferred to Editor@KensingtonOutlook.com.

PLEASE NOTE: Modern digital customs call for one space, rather than the traditional two, after all periods.

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...Traffic Stop, from Front Page

them as a substitute for valid registration.” Cordova had paid her registration October 2, and she had a 60-day vehicle-moving permit issued by the DMV for the purpose of getting her smog permit.

The RLS release accused Cordova of having “lobbed a delusional claim,” telling “outright lies,” and other charges. His explanation for the sustaining of the most serious charge against Barrow, that of not properly supervising Officer Ramos, is that Richmond’s investigator found that Barrow should have counseled Ramos not to stop Cordova because she “would fly off the handle and bring forth a litany of false allegations.” Buffington writes, “Were law enforcement agencies to adopt such a course of logic, anybody who is rancorous towards the police would be exempt from following the law; enforcing the law would come to a stand-still.” When asked to provide evidence of the Richmond investigator drawing such a conclusion, Buffington did not answer

Buffington appeared at the KPPCSD meeting April 14 and, during the public comment period, said that Barrow and Ramos and other KPD officers waived their right to privacy and wanted the entire independent investigation released to the public. He asked that the complainant, Cordova, approve that plan. Then he left the podium and the meeting. Later, during the meeting, Interim Chief Hart said he did not know how such a release would come about. Problems abound, in that the KPPCSD board is the body to which Ramos or Barrow could appeal whatever punishment comes their way, and for that reason, the board has not read the report.

Also complicating a release of the report is that witnesses interviewed during such investigations are told that their testimony is confidential and will remain that way. For the report to be released, said Hart the day following the meeting, “Buffington would need approval. Either the witnesses would have to sign off or their testimony would need to be redacted. But keep in mind, this has nothing to do with me. I still fall within California Penal Code 832.7— personnel matters are kept confidential.”

An Internal Affairs report goes to the executive of the police organization in question—in Kensington’s case, to Chief Hart. How did Buffington receive a copy? “At this time I’m not able to provide that information,” Hart said. “But this is what I’m going to surmise. I don’t have any personal direct information this is going on,” he cautioned. “I surmise that in light of the significant media attention and significant adverse comments made by the complainant, and the significant public concern to know the facts, that the police and the union said, ‘Let’s release this.’” He added that he had not given a copy to the union or to the officers, and insisted that the Richmond investigator “did not give it to anybody.” When asked about Barrow’s potential punishment for the three sustained findings, Hart said that he could not comment.

On April 13, board vice-president Rachelle Sherris-Watt posted a response to the RLS press release. Sherris-Watt wrote in part, “The character and credibility assassination attempt guised in the form of a press release read like a B-movie script with cowering cops and hysterical heroines... The idea that Ms. Cordova has demonstrated instability and hostility towards the KPD would be laughable if it were not wholesale fabrication. She has declared on the dais and in private conversation that she supports Kensington keeping its independent police department and that she would consider it a failure should it disappear on her watch...sadly, problems within the KPD were well documented prior to Ms. Cordova’s tenure on the Board. She had, and continues to have, amicable relationships within the department. She is a tenacious advocate for good government and an indefatigable steward of the public’s money...”

MOU Approved
On April 14, the board members heard the second reading of the proposed memorandum of understanding that covers 42 months, from July 1, 2014 through December 31, 2017. There are no wage increases until March 1, 2016, after which a 3% across-the-board increase applies, upped by another 3% increase in March 2017. Employees contributing to their health coverage and pension funds offset increases for a contract that several referred to as revenue-neutral. After extended public comment and questions answered by the district’s negotiators (such as that the MOU could be nullified should the district decide to contract out to another department), the MOU was adopted by a vote of 3-2, with Cordova and Sherris-Watt in the minority. Sherris-Watt explained her vote by noting that she had asked repeatedly for a five-year plan that demonstrated the contract’s sustainability. Since she had never received such assurance, she could not in good faith support the new contract.

At the start of the meeting, a new officer, familiar to many as he has been a reserve officer for six years, was sworn in as a full-time employee. Theodore William Foley has served in the Army, the Coast Guard, with the police in Visalia and the sheriff’s department in Madera County. He received two commendations in 2012, one for alerting federal authorities to a possible terrorist whom he recognized from a description, and one in which he stopped to help a woman in distress and ended up lifting a truck off a man trapped underneath. His swearing-in was greeted with applause from a grateful audience.

Said Hart the day following the meeting, “My goal is to try to find a way to engage community support and interactions to move this department forward through a dark period. No agency is perfect, but we are not corrupt, we are ethical. We investigate crimes, and we still have real crime going on. This is all excess noise that gets in the way.”

...Letters, from Page 2

The conflict of interest, lack of impartiality, and politicking of the GM/COP position has wreaked havoc on the town’s legal budget, while personnel issues and conflicts abound regarding complaints about the chief, staff, etc. from within the department and from the public.

No amount of protocols in a manual can substitute for a nonpolitical employee, highly trained, experienced and educated in public administration to solve problems and provide guidance. All across California are full- and part-time combined GM positions providing ethical, competent, honest, transparent services to their communities. In Muir Beach a part-time GM’s hours increase as needed; in Cloverdale the job is combined with city clerk; in Sebastapol, the city manager is combined with city attorney. We have been without for so long that what we have appears to be the norm. One has only to step outside of Kensington to see that other towns do it better.

Marilyn Stollon

Carmelite Sisters Thank Community
To the Editor,

It has now been just over a year since the new community of Carmelite Sisters reopened the monastery on Rincon Rd. It has been a year of prayer and change, and I thought the Kensington community might like an update on what has been taking place.

The sisters remain very grateful for the welcome they continue to receive. Mother Superior Sylvia Gemma of Jesus and Mary O.C.D. says the generosity and warmth of the Kensington area community has far exceeded anything they had hoped to receive and she remains very thankful for all the support.

The sisters continue to make improvements to the grounds and facilities. Many people may have noticed the new automatic entrance gate, which was donated by a very generous couple from El Cerrito. Additionally, lights have been installed along the driveway and courtyard. Other improvements to the interior landscaping have continued as the sisters and volunteers have attempted to clear a lot of the overgrown shrubbery and replant the grounds with flowers, roses, fruit trees, and vegetables. Renovation of the building continues slowly as the sisters deal with the same kinds of foundation issues that plague many homes in the hills.

Thanks to donations to the building fund, they have been able to make some repairs and once more funds are available, they are hoping to tackle more substantial projects. Anyone interested in contributing to the building fund can send donations to: Carmel of Jesus Mary and Joseph, 68 Rincon Rd., Kensington, CA 94707.

All in all, the sisters seem very content in their new home and are happy to continue to serve the community by fulfilling prayer requests left in the turnstile at the main entrance. Daily services open to the public are offered each morning. A complete schedule is posted on the door to the main chapel.

Eric Riess

Yogi Berra Strikes Out
Dear Editor,

“The members of the KPPCSD board are to be commended for the time and effort they have contributed toward the community... However, there have been times during...meetings when the board has been overly cautious about informing the public of their intent and motivation. This sense of secrecy has fostered speculation and rumor that has led to people becoming misinformed. It has also bred a confrontational attitude between the board and the public... While personnel proceedings certainly must be managed with extreme care, the board could make a greater effort to allay the concerns of the public by being more communicative.”¹

“It’s like déjà-vu, all over again”²

A. Stevens Delk


1. John Feld, Editor, *Kensington Outlook*, July/August 2006
2. Yogi Berra, *What Time Is It? You Mean Now?: Advice for Life from the Zennest Master of Them All*, 2003

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Highlights from the March Kensington Police Log

March 1
SUSPICIOUS EVENT, Grizzly Peak Blvd.
Magnet found on the passenger side rear door of resident’s vehicle, no damage.

March 2
MISCELLANEOUS, Kingston Rd.
Report of raccoon under deck.

March 3
MISCELLANEOUS, Willamette Ave.
Complaint of dumpster blocking roadway.

March 4
MISCELLANEOUS, Anson Way.
Resident needed advice regarding a jealous girlfriend.

March 6
SUSPICIOUS EVENT, Highland Blvd.
Front gate had fallen and neighbor became concerned.
SUSPICIOUS PERSON, Highland Blvd.
Unknown person lifted up a car cover to look at the car for unknown reasons...UTL (unable to locate).
SUSPICIOUS EVENT, Amherst Ave.
Unknown teenagers threw 3 lemons at a residence. . .no damage.

March 7
SUSPICIOUS PERSON, Arlmont Dr.
Suspicious female seen in front of home and was gone prior to arrival of officer.
IDENTITY THEFT, Windsor Ave.
Personal information used to open charge accounts. Under investigation.

March 11
MISCELLANEOUS, Beloit Ave.
Tree branch fallen on power lines. PG&E responded to remove branch.
TOWED, Colusa Ave.
Vehicle towed for blocking a driveway
OUTSIDE ASSIST, Colusa Ave.
Traffic control downed wire; assisted ECFD 65.
SUSPICIOUS PERSON, Arlington Ave.
Unknown adult male on neighbor’s property in the dark.

March 12
SUSPICIOUS PERSON, Kenyon Ave.
Chimney cleaner on scene doing repairs.
LOST PROPERTY, Trinity Ave.
Homeowner’s son misplaced/lost family property.

March 13
SUSPICIOUS EVENT, Coventry Rd.
Unable to find anything suspicious around the residence.
VANDALISM, Lawson Rd.
Unknown suspect(s) broke a bedroom window, entered a vacant home, and vandalized it.
PETTY THEFT, Beloit Ave.
Packages stolen from porch.
SUSPICIOUS VEHICLE, Kingston Rd.
Suspicious vehicle parked in the area.

March 14
THEFT, Cambridge Ave.
Theft from unlocked vehicle.

March 15
SUSPICIOUS PERSON, Edgecroft Rd.
Door to door solicitor. Advised to leave the area due to no CCC permit.

March 16
SUSPICIOUS PERSON, Berkeley Park Blvd.
Half-dressed male was found inside of the East Bay MUD property and was placed on a W&I 5150. Transported to hospital without incident.

March 17
ACCIDENT, Wellesley Ave.
Non-injury accident car vs. motorcycle.

March 18
ACCIDENT, Ocean View Ave.
Parked car hit and run accident.
SUSPICIOUS PERSON, Cambridge Ave.
Door to door solicitor. Advised to leave the area due to no CCC permit.
911 DISCONNECT, Avon Rd.
Gardener on scene pocket-dialed 911. No foul play found.

March 20
SUSPICIOUS EVENT, Amherst Ave.
Un known subject(s) threw eggs at a residence. No damage done.

Ad Hoc Committee Puts on Forum, Seeks Community Input

KPPCSD’s Ad Hoc Committee is in the process of completing preliminary findings relative to the three tasks that the board outlined as possible governance and operations alternatives, including the bifurcation of the general manager/chief of police position, contracting of police services, and consolidating with the Fire District. A public forum will be held Saturday, June 4,10am at the Community Center to present those findings, obtain community input, and respond to questions. More details about the forum will be provided at the committee’s May and June meetings, on the committee’s web page, in the June *Outlook*, on NextDoor Kensington, and by postings throughout the community.

Community Forum
Ad Hoc Committee Preliminary Findings and Public input
Saturday, June 4 at 10am

In addition to the three tasks, the Board of Directors charged the committee with obtaining input from Kensington residents about the nature of police services the community desires. A brief survey has been developed to obtain that information. The survey

is intended to get a general idea about which services residents believe are most important and how they feel about their direct personal experience, if any, with those services. This is an online survey at www.surveymonkey.com/r/2QHPM28 A postcard about the survey is also being sent to every address in Kensington.

For those residents who do not use the internet or may find it difficult filling out the survey at home, Kensington’s librarians will assist residents using the library’s computers. We hope that you will take advantage of this opportunity to express your views and share your experiences.

The next meeting of the committee will be Thursday, May 5 at 7pm at the Community Center. The public is always welcome. We appreciate those residents who have been attending and providing input. The KPPCSD website hosts the Ad Hoc Committee web page, which contains meeting agendas, audio recordings of the meetings, and relevant documents. The April meeting agenda packet contains an update of the three subcommittees’ work. <http://kensingtoncalifornia.org/kppcsd-board/ad-hoc-governance-committee/> In addition, if you have any questions or comments about the committee’s work, you can e-mail me at: dpspath106@gmail.com.

LETTER FROM JASON SIMMS, KENSINGTON SERVICE STATION

Dear Customers, Neighbors, and Friends,

It is with mixed emotions, but mostly excitement, that we share the news that we are expanding. No, we are not leaving Kensington completely. For the last 6 years, the community has trusted us with their cars and helped us grow to what we have become. We want to continue to support you. Loren (who you all know and love) will continue to run the Kensington location to provide day-to-day service needs of the community. This will mean that we can still provide the convenient and quality basic services that you have come to trust at this location. Larger services, bigger repair jobs, and diagnostics will be attended to at the second location where Jason will make his home. However, he will make regular visits to Kensington to check on things.

Our second location is 4,200 sq. ft. This added space will allow us to shorten the wait time for repairs, expand our services to include A/C work, and expand our classic car repair business. A shuttle service between both locations will ensure dropping off your car is as convenient as ever. Our new facility will include the same great mechanics that care for your cars now as well as new faces that will provide the same standard of care you have come to expect from us.

With this move will come a complete re-branding of the business. Starting July 1, we will be known as Argonaut Garage. As for our new name, many dinners with friends and family have been dominated with suggestions of new names. We shuffled through so many it was tiring. Argonaut fits with who I am and what we are aiming to accomplish. Other than the obvious, *Jason and the Argonauts*, the definition of an Argonaut is “a person in quest of something dangerous but rewarding; adventurer.” Sounds like us right?

Our new facility, Argonaut Garage, located at San Pablo and Cedar, is bathed in Berkeley car repair history. 30 years ago it was the Griswold's Ferrari, Alfa Romeo, and Aston Martin dealership, where a host of incredible mechanics cut their teeth. These mechanics today run some of the most elite shops in Berkeley servicing Bentley, Rolls Royce, Ferrari, and building custom race cars. We hope to honor the history of this building and those mechanics by striving to achieve such great things with your cars.

As a thank you to our customers and to encourage you to visit our second location, we will be offering three options for pre-paid discount cards.

- **Option 1: Sweat equity for shop credit of \$500 towards labor.**
The first 10 people who volunteer 10 hours to help us demo and set up at the new building (no skills necessary), will receive a shop credit of \$500 toward labor good for two years. You will also receive your name on the wall of shop, a t-shirt or hoodie, and a license plate frame both with the new logo.
- **Option 2: Prepaid shop credit of \$500 towards labor.**
We will offer a limited number of these at \$300. The shop credit will be good for 2 years and includes a t-shirt or hoodie and a license plate frame both with the new logo.
- **Option 3: Prepaid shop credit of \$200 towards labor.**
We will offer a limited number of these for \$150 dollars. The shop credit will be good for 2 years and includes a t-shirt or hoodie and a license plate frame both with the new logo.

More details about our grand opening party and an open for business date of Argonaut Garage will follow.

Thanks so much for all your past and future support.

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Market Update

◆ Recently Sold! ◆



43 Arlington Avenue
Kensington

Known as Cactus Corner, this property has a magnificent cactus & succulent garden. 3+BR/2BA.
Originally offered at \$1,098,000



45 Marguerita Road
Kensington

A Millar White modern masterpiece. Classic Mid-Century architecture. 3+BR/3BA.
Originally offered at \$1,348,000



763 Bay Tree Lane
El Cerrito Hills

Stunning renovation & modern improvements with Bay views. 3BR/2BA.
Originally offered at \$1,398,000

◆ New Listings ◆



565 Bonnie Drive
El Cerrito Hills

Restored 1940's California Spanish 5BR/3BA by recognized Bee Renovated design team. Double lot & Golden Gate view!
Offered at: \$1,398,000



2975 Shasta Road
Berkeley Hills

Tetsuo Takayanagi AIA design C.1959. Dramatic example of Mid-Century Modernism. Golden Gate view. 4BR/3.5BA.
Offered at: \$1,398,000



31 Florida Avenue
Berkeley

Romantic Mediterranean, gorgeous Italianate architectural details. Grand spaces & intimate environment. 3+BR/3BA.
Offered at \$1,398,000

If you are considering selling your home or just would like to know the value in todays market call me, the appointment is complimentary and confidential. An additional complimentary service I provide is Trust Valuations so that the stepped up basis can be established for estates when needed. I specialize in working with families in preparing their properties for sale, tailored to meet the needs of the client, eliminating the stress and making the process manageable.



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Over thirty-five years of experience you can count on.
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rfrassetto@grubbco.com
Visit GRUBBCO.COM for additional information about current listings.



Information deemed reliable but not guaranteed. Data provided by East Bay Regional Data - MLS.



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Please contact the admissions office for more information.
admissions@prospectsierra.org

Elementary School Campus
2060 Tapscott Avenue, El Cerrito
510-809-9018

Middle School Campus
960 Avis Drive, El Cerrito
510-809-9025

prospectsierra.org

★ KENSINGTON HILLTOP ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ★

IT'S HERE!

PTA & DADS' CLUB 69TH ANNUAL
SPRING CARNIVAL



SATURDAY, MAY 7 ★ 11 AM - 3 PM at 90 HIGHLAND BLVD.

RAFFLE ★ Grand Prize: HANDMADE QUILT! ★ Runner Up Prizes: SHOPPING SPREES AT ARLINGTON AND COLUSA CIRCLE SHOPS!

Proceeds fund the PTA's purchase of school supplies, assemblies, & emergency readiness kits.

★ GAMES ★ PIE BAKING CONTEST ★ USED BIKE SALE ★ DADS' CLUB GRILL ★ CAKE WALK ★ PLASMA CAR RACES ★ COTTON CANDY ★ CARNIVAL RAFFLE ★ PLANT SALE ★ WHITE ELEPHANT SALE ★ SNO CONES ★ CRAFTS ★

Thank you Ruth Frassetto & The Grubb Company for your generous support.



May 7 Spring Carnival a Multi-Layered Event

Kensington Hilltop Elementary School Fundraiser

The 69th Annual Spring Carnival at Kensington Hilltop Elementary School kicks off Saturday, May 7 from 11am-3pm. Come out and enjoy carnival games and prizes, great food, yummy treats, and bargains for the whole family! Be entertained by Hilltop’s own Silver and Gold bands!

Games, Activities and Treats

We’ll have games and activities for all ages. Have fun with favorites such as the Water Balloon Catapult, Winner Winner Chicken Dinner, Ringo-A-Flamingo, Cheese Toss, and Sleeping Pirate. Win a delicious cake from the ever-popular Cake Walk. “My favorite game at the Carnival is the Cake Walk,” says 6th grader Nathan Shum. “My friends and I all play a round together, and it doesn’t matter who wins because we always share the cake. And we eat it with our hands!” Many thanks to realtor Ruth Frassetto for her twelve-year sponsorship of the Cake Walk and her generous donation of a whopping sixty cakes. Also returning are Duck Pond, Crazy Birds, and the not-to-be missed Minute-to-Win-It booth! Want even more excitement? Try out our new Plasma Car Speedway!

Then rest a bit with sit-down activities including face painting, hair feathers, and a new craft booth where you can design your own buttons.

Feeling Hungry?

Nothing like all those games to whet your appetite. As always, the Dads’ Club Grill will serve its famous, mouth-watering tri-tip sandwiches as well as sausages, hamburgers, veggie burgers, and hotdogs. Still have room? Enjoy yummy carnival treats such as popcorn, snocones, root beer floats, and cotton candy.

Shopping

Repurpose with purpose: donate gently used items to our popular White Elephant Sale. Items will be accepted 9am-6pm May 6, at the front entrance of Hilltop. (No clothing, computers, electronics, or large furniture please.)

Then switch gears and get your shopping groove on! Stop by the White Elephant Sale on Carnival day for hundreds of great bargains!

Also be sure to come early for great bikes at Deals on Wheels. Or free up garage space and give your old bike new life. Donated bikes can be dropped off at Hilltop on Friday, May 6 or at Jason’s Chevron Station through May 6. Jason will generously provide 20 percent off labor for any donation.

The 5th annual Rhea Wilson Plant Sale will be bigger and better than ever! Bring home succulents, carnivorous plants, terrariums, and the popular fairy garden starter kits. (See adjoining story for more info.)

Raffle

Grand prize for the 34th annual raffle is the beautiful “Kaleidoscope” quilt now on display at the Kensington Library. Runner-up prizes include gift certificates from Arlington and Colusa Circle shops. Winning tickets are drawn on the day of the carnival, so don’t miss it! (See raffle story for more and how to buy raffle tickets.)

Pie Baking Contest

We love pie and can’t wait to see all the delicious entries this year. Pies will be accepted in four categories (fruit, nut, dairy, and student submission). Entry forms and fees (\$10) must be submitted by Friday, May 6 at 11am. Pies should be dropped off Saturday, May 7 between 11-11:30am at the school’s multipurpose room. Winning bakers receive fabulous prizes and bragging rights.

Spring Carnival and raffle proceeds are used to fund PTA and Dads’ Club projects such as earthquake readiness supplies, recreation equipment for the kids such as balls and hula-hoops, school assemblies, Art Night and Movie Night. Come show your support for Kensington Hilltop! We’d love to see you. —Yvonne Lau, PTA Carnival Chair

Kensington Hilltop Carnival Raffle in Its 34th Year

It’s time for the annual Carnival Raffle (aka Quilt Raffle)—and the Kensington community has again worked together to create great raffle prizes to support the Kensington Elementary School PTA.

This year’s traditional grand prize quilt was skillfully made by math teacher Jean Stenquist together with school parents Sherry Garcia and Kin Foong Perry. The quilt, in the log cabin barn-raising pattern, is made with cheerful colors and named “Kaleidoscope.”

The three wonderful runner-up prizes are shopping sprees at Kensington businesses. Thanks to the many wonderful businesses that have offered gift certificates, each shopping spree is worth several hundred dollars! Look at all the wonderful businesses in our midst.

The Arlington Avenue Shopping Spree includes gift certificates to the Arlington, Country Cheese Coffee Market, Kensington Fine Foods, Kensington Home & Hardware, Kensington Nail Spa, Inn Kensington, Pacific Acupuncture, and Young’s Market.

The Colusa Circle Shopping Spree #1 includes gift certificates to Circle Salon, Colusa Market, Hendrickson’s Clinic, Kensington Veterinary Hospital, and Semifreddi’s.

The Colusa Circle Shopping Spree #2 includes gift certificates to Benchmark Pizza, Colusa Market, the Fuse Fitness, and the Kensington Farmers’ Market.

Realtor Mark Choi of Marvin Gardens Real Estate on Arlington Avenue has again generously underwritten the costs of the raffle tickets and supplies.

This fundraising effort is to help the Kensington Hilltop PTA cover costs and activities at the school such as emergency preparedness, educational school assemblies, the Outdoor Classroom/Gardening program, and teacher support.

\$2 raffle tickets can be purchased from any Hilltop student or at the Spring Carnival. Raffle ticket winners will be announced at the carnival, and it is not necessary to be present to win. Thank you for supporting Kensington Hilltop Elementary!



“Kaleidoscope” quilt is this year’s grand prize.

REMEMBER THIS DAY!



Happy MOTHER'S DAY

SUNDAY, MAY 8th

D'Jour Floral of Kensington Gardens
Celebrate Mother's Day, graduation or any special day with a fresh floral arrangement, Hawaiian Lei or bouquet provided by **D'Jour Floral of Kensington Gardens**. Call Judy at 510-525-7232 or email antiquesdjour@aol.com to arrange for fresh floral arrangements to be delivered. Hawaiian Leis and holiday deliveries are limited and should be pre-booked a minimum of 72 hours in advance.

Shopping on the Arlington?
Stop by the **Country Cheese Company**. In addition to their fine selection of delectables, you will find assorted bouquets from D'Jour Floral.

Shopping on Colusa?
Look for a selection of bouquets and plants fresh daily at **Colusa Market**.

Hilltop Spring Carnival Plant Sale Comes Full Circle

Karen Wilson Veitch has fond memories of the Kensington Hilltop Plant Sale—and its connection to her mother, Rhea Wilson. “The Plant Sale goes way back to when I was a kid and my mother ran it,” says Veitch. She goes on to describe her mother’s instrumental role in its success: “Our kitchen was a veritable hot-house of cuttings, seedlings, and flowers for months prior to Carnival!”



Now named in tribute to Karen’s late mother, the Rhea Wilson Plant Sale is inspiring a new generation of Kensington kids to get their hands dirty while getting creative with plants. Kensington Hilltop’s current PTA Outdoor Classroom Chair, Kate Verhoef, believes in the power of hands-on learning, so during lunch recess she takes groups of kids out into the school garden to learn about garden ecosystems. Verhoef also started the “Green Team,” in which different grades volunteer to pick up trash around school during lunch recess, imparting lessons in civic responsibility

and caring for the environment. An avid gardener herself, Verhoef also mobilizes parent volunteers to weed, mulch, plant, and build planting beds for classrooms. Many classes literally enjoy the fruits of their labor!

For this year’s plant sale, Hilltop kids have been busy growing vegetables and flowers, propagating succulents, and creating gorgeous arrangements in pots. They are also making the very popular Fairy Garden Starter Kits, one-of-a-kind glazed pots, and indoor terrariums. Proceeds from the plant sale support important programs like the Outdoor Classroom. Just in time for Mother’s Day, the Rhea Wilson Plant Sale will have something for everyone. See you there! —Kate Verhoef, PTA Outdoor Classroom Chair



A young carnival-goer takes a chance at Winner Chicken Dinner.



Photos by Serena Heaslip and Doug Diego



Fairy Gardens are always popular.



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JohnCDey@Gmail.com

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K E N S I N G T O N

Community Education

KASEP

A place is only as good as the people in it,” and I have certainly found it to be true at KCC, with our family of KASEP teachers and with the families participating in our programs. As administrator, I enjoyed growing our program, adding to the diversity of classes and bringing exciting teachers, field trips and creativity to KCC’s KASEP and Summer Camp worlds. Alas, I have decided to retire at the end of December 2016.

I am happy to say that Kari Tindol, Hilltop parent, will be taking my place and has worked alongside me since March. Kari is a familiar face as past president of Hilltop’s PTA, a parent of two outstanding 6th and 4th grade boys who participated in KASEP, and someone who brings varied experiences to our world such as being a high school French teacher and liaison for community outreach with Albany’s Police Department. Welcome Kari!

Please come visit us this spring and say hello to Kari. KASEP FALL session will start in September with list of classes and brochures going home the second week of the new school year, August 29. —Marty Westby



Welcome Back Ethan Houser,
Director of KCC Summer Camp



Off to KASEP Gymnastics We Go!



KARI TINDOL, KCC Administrator In-Training



Kevin with his Jazzercisers

Jazzercise

Strength, tone, dance - come see what you are missing. 8:15am - 9:15am, Monday - 8:15am - 9:15am, Monday - Friday. Drop-ins are welcome. Community Center. Instructor is Kevin.

How we work it - Low Impact Jazzercise

Rock it out with Lite versions of Dance, Fusion, Fusion, and Core. With foot stomp-ing beats and modified movements, lower intensity cardio plus strength classes work it where you need it.

What’s in it for you

Tone your whole body, build balance and flexibility, and charge up your metabo-lism. Post-workout you’ll feel fabulous with more energy, a tighter core and a mood boost.

Acrylic Artists

Wednesdays, 9:45am - 12:30pm

Open Studio, lots of natural light. Come paint in community of other artists. Easels are provided, bring your canvas, paints and creativity! The mornings are spent painting, bring a lunch and relax. Community Center, ongoing.

Photos by Marty Westby

KCC Summer Camp 2016

For Campers entering 1st-6th Grades the Fall

KCC Summer Camp offers a traditional day camp all summer long, starting the Monday after WCCUSD ends the academic school year and continuing for 9 more weeks, ending Friday August 19th. Each week hosts a different theme with an accompanying afternoon activity for hands-on exploration such as circus arts, gymnastics, cooking and sports mania! Check us out – every Wednesday we head out on a chartered bus to explore local sites. We offer campers new experiences away from the regular camp setting and on these field trip days we hike, climb, explore, or swim.

Campers will have a blast participating in daily camp activities including Arts & Crafts, Nature, Dance, Tennis, Sports, Olympic Week and of course Capture the Flag, voted “Best Camp Game”. We do all these activities right here in our gorgeous Kensington park, without having to leave the foot print of our park setting.

Enroll by the Week. Cost \$265 per camper

Camp begins at 9:00am and ends at 5:00pm, M-F. Extended care is available for an addi-tional fee. Enroll online at <http://www.kensingtoncommunitycouncil.org>. Register early to ensure we have space available (first week is already full!).

Week 1	June 13- June 17 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Specialty: Carpentry• <i>Field Trip: Scandia Miniature Golf/Laser Tag</i>	Week 6	July 18-July 22 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Specialty: Gymnastics• <i>Field Trip: Bladium/ Rock Climbing & Soccer</i>
Week 2	June 20- June 24 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Specialty: Gymnastiucs• <i>Field Trip: Adventure Playground/ Berkeley</i>	Week 7	July 25-July 29 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Specialty: Fiber Fun• <i>Field Trip: Tilden Park: Jewel Lake & Animal Farm; Karaoke Friday</i>
Week 3	June 27- July 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Specialty: Circus Arts• <i>Field Trip: Oakland Zoo; Balloon Animals</i>	Week 8	August 1-August 5 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Specialty: OLYMPIC WEEK• <i>Field Trip: Lawrence Hall of Science</i>
Week 4	July 5-July 8 \$220/ Closed July 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Specialty: SkyHawk - Sports Week!• <i>SPIRIT WEEK -</i>	Week 9	August 8-August 12 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Specialty: Block Printing• <i>Field Trip: El Cerrito Pool Party</i>

KCC/KASEP Office: 59 Arlington Ave., Bldg E (Across the grassy field above the tennis courts in Kensington Park), Kensington CA 94707. E-mail: kccec@yahoo.com, or call 525-0292. M-F, 10am-4pm.

Tennis Court Reservations: For weekends and holidays only, beginning at 9am. Call the KCC office for info. Court Fees: 45-min. singles reservation: Residents: \$2; Non-residents: \$5.

Kensington Community Center Rental Info: Please call KPPCSD (Kensington Police Protection and Community Services District) at 510-526-4141.

Kensington Calendar

Ongoing Low Impact Jazzercise, 8:15-9:15am, Mondays through Fridays, Community Center.

Ongoing Body Sculpting, 9:15-10:15am, Tuesdays and Thursdays, Community Center.

Ongoing Acrylic Artists, Wednesdays 9:45-12:30pm, Community Center. Paint in Open Studio. Easels provided.

Ongoing Body Sculpting, 9:15-10:15am, Tuesdays and Thursdays, Community Center.

May 1, Colusa Circle Merchant’s Association BLOSSOM FESTIVAL. Kids gather a fresh May Day bouquet, “selfie” booth for a special Mother’s Day portrait. Look for special offers and coupons from Circle merchants. At Colusa Circle, 10am-2pm.

May 2 Stained Glass Suncatchers. Come create a unique suncatcher! These make wonderful cards, gifts, and ornaments with a beautiful stained-glass effect. Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave. 3-4pm. Best for ages 4 and up. Free. 524-3043.

May 2 Kensington Library Knitting Club “The Castoffs.” All levels welcome. Please bring your own needles and yarn. We will provide support, encouragement and help. Learn new stitches, share your talents, and meet new friends. Meets on the first Monday of the month. Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave. 6:30pm. Free. 524-3043

May 3, 10, 17, 24, and 31 Family Story

time. Lots of picture books, songs, rhymes, and fun! Stuffed animals & pajamas welcome. Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave. 6:30pm. Free. 524-3043.

May 5 and 26 Baby & Toddler Story-time. Stories, songs & action rhymes for young children and their caregivers. Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave. Two identical sessions 10:15am & 11:15am. Free. 524-3043.

May 7 Annual Spring Carnival at Kensington Hilltop Elementary School, 11am-3pm. Carnival games and prizes, benefits school programs. See page 6.

May 7 Free Comic Book Day! Stop by the library anytime this Saturday to explore comics, write captions, and create your own comic! Or just stop by and pick up your free book. Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave. Free. 524-3043.

May 7 “Found in Time,” a photography exhibition by Lisa Toby Goodman. Opening reception 4-8pm. Show runs May 7-June 7. Open Saturdays 10-4pm, Thursdays and Fridays 12-4pm and by appointment. Nan Phelps Photography, 398 Colusa Ave. 528-8845.

May 7, 8, Friends of Kensington Library Spring Book Sale. Saturday – 9-4, Sunday 11-4, bag sale, Sunday 2-4pm. Special selections (new, old, cheap, unusual, etc.) Community Center.

May 9 Jedi Master Lego Workshop! The-Force Awakens in this advanced engineering course for young Jedi! Discover key engineering concepts such as gear trains and worm drives, build LEGO X-Wings, Star Destroyers, Cloud Cities, and other

complex machines and structures from a galaxy far, far away. 3-4:30pm. You must register for this workshop. Best for age 6 and up. Free. 524-3043.

May 9 and 23 Digital Docent. Kensington Library’s Digital Docent will answer your eReader and digital library questions every other Monday by appointment at 1 & 1:30pm. This one-on-one 30-minute appointment is intended for people seeking assistance with eBooks and eReaders. Sign up onsite at Kensington Library Info Desk. Please bring your device. Free. 524-3043.

May 10 Poetry Readings. Join us at the library for an evening full of readings from several local poets, including Tess Taylor, Nate Klug, Rachel Richardson, and Matthew Siegel. El Cerrito Library, 6410 Stockton Avenue, 6:30-7:30pm. Free, open to all ages.

May 14 Read to Izzie. Izzie is a registered therapy dog and she loves to have children read to her. Fifteen-minute appointments can be booked; walk-ins welcome to remaining time. Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave. 10-12pm. Free. 524-3043.

May 14 Science Saturday Event. Happy Bright Kids presents “The Three Little Engineers,” an educational, funny, interactive stage puppet program. Kids will learn what engineering is, what an engineer does, and the general dos and don’ts of engineering. All ages welcome! El Cerrito Library, 6510 Stockton Ave. 11am. Free. 510-526-7512

May 15 The Kensington Unit of the League of Women Voters will meet at 12:30 on our park bench in Kensington Park. Bring

your own lunch, expect a good discussion of local issues. Details and confirm at 524-6071. Guests welcome.

May 17 Berkeley Garden Club Lecture Program, Albany Community Center, 1249 Marin Avenue. “Combining Nature to Create Simple Designs” by Katharina Stuart, Floral and Art Design. 12:30-1 Plant Exchange, 1-2 General Meeting, 2-3 Lecture.

May 21 Heartfulness Meditation: An Introduction. Learn to Meditate with Maja Bengston from the Shri Ram Chandra Mission Meditation & Retreat Center. Dr. Soni and his wife Gita will answer questions and lead a beginner’s guided heartfulness mediation. Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave., 12pm. Free. 524-3043.

May 21 “Eruption of Tambora” Ball. Join the Bay Area English Regency Society in celebrating the bicentennial of the largest volcanic eruption in history, at the Arlington Community Church. Costumes are encouraged and there will be dancing to live music starting at 8:00 p.m. For more information, go to: <http://baers.org/MansfieldPark.pdf>baers.org/index.html - baerscal.

May 23 Kensington Library Book Club. Discussion of A Tale of Two Cities, by Charles Dickens. Book Club normally meets on the 4th Monday of the month. Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave., 6:30pm. 524-3043.

Town Meetings

(Schedule Subject to Change – Call to Confirm.)

Kensington Community Center
59 Arlington Ave., Kensington

KCC-May 2, Kensington Community Council 1st Mondays, 7:30pm. 525-0292

FKL-May 3, Friends of the Kensington Library, 7pm (at the Library) 1st Tuesdays

Ad Hoc Committee-May 5, 7pm, Community Center. 1st Thursdays

KPSC-May 9, Kensington Public Safety Council Earthquake/Disaster Preparedness 2nd Mondays, 6pm. 501-8165

KARO/ECHO-Amateur Radio Operators 2nd Mondays of odd months, 7:30pm. 524-9815

KFPD-May 11, Fire Protection District 2nd Wednesdays, 7pm. 527-8395

KPPCSD-May 12, Police Protection and Community Services District 2nd Thursdays 7:30pm. 526-4141

KIC-May 23, Kensington Improvement Club 4th Mondays, 7:30pm. 524-7514.

KMAC (Tent.)-May 31, Municipal Advisory Council Last Tues. 7pm. (Call Supe. Gioia’s office to confirm: 231-8691)

KPOA Property Owners Association Meets quarterly. 559-8232

Kensington Farmers’ Market Live produce & live music every Sunday, 10am-2pm, Colusa Circle.

KPOA hosts Annual Membership Meeting and “K” Group Information Fair

The Annual Membership Meeting of the Kensington Property Owners Association will be held Saturday May 14 from 10-noon at the Community Center. All residents are welcome. This year we will present informative speakers as well as host a public information fair. The fair will be an opportunity for both new and old residents to learn more about the “K” groups by visiting their tables following the speakers. Our meeting agenda includes the following:

1. Update on the schools and parcel tax renewal on the June ballot. **Bruce Harter**, Superintendent West Contra Costa County Unified School District
2. What to expect from the Ad Hoc Committee studying restructuring of police operations and governance of service districts. **David Spath**, Chair, Ad Hoc Committee for Governance and Operations Structure of the KPPCSD
3. Financial planning: Looking at likely scenarios for predicting Kensington’s future. **Rob Firmin**, Director KPOA
4. Lessons learned from the Oakland Hills fire. **Cheryl Miller**, Diablo Fire Safe
5. Community Center & Public Safety Building rehabilitation: Keeping our public buildings safe and useable. **Rachelle Sherris-Watt**, KPPCSD Director, **Don Dommer**, KFD Director (invited)

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The 3rd Annual Hillside Festival

Events throughout the 100-acre Hillside Natural Area: Hikes, Pop- Up Bike Park sponsored by the El Cerrito High Mountain Bike Team, Nature Walks, events for kids and families, a geo-caching hike, Historical Talks, Garden Giveaways, more. Plus: an 8:30am. bird walk and an early evening hillside meditation.

10am-5pm Sunday, May 15

Free! Gathering, Schmidt Lane, EC Recycling Center.

Information, Dave Weinstein, 510-524-1737, davidsweinstein@yahoo.com,

For more: www.ectrailtrekkers.org.

The festival is free but maintaining and restoring the Hillside is not. Please make a tax-deductible donation to this effort with a check to “El Cerrito Trail Trekkers,” with “Hillside Restoration” in the message line. Send to Pam Austin, 834 Kearney St., EC 94530. Or donate online on our website.



...Police Log from Page 4

March 22

FIREARM DONATION, Arlmont Rd.

Resident did not want his firearm any longer and donated it to KPD.

March 23

POLICE MISC., Colusa Ave.

Citizens locked into Sunset Cemetery..

March 24

DISTURBANCE, Ocean View Ave.

Resident upset regarding house numbers painted on curb without permission.

March 25

ALARM/MEDICAL, Sunset Dr.

Construction worker set off alarm accidentally, then cut his head on a street sign while trying to get his cellphone.

March 26

STALKING, Ardmore Ave.

Report of ex-coworker following resident around.

DISTURBANCE, Wellesley Ave.

Report of neighbor burning garbage.

March 28

MISCELLANEOUS, Sunset Dr.

Resident looking for her dog who escaped from her backyard.

ANIMAL, Eureka Ave.

Flagged down by citizen because a dog was attacked by another dog. No injuries to people, and report taken.

SUSPICIOUS VEHICLE, Ardmore Ave.

Resident had stopped to look at his GPS, and a welfare check of the driver revealed that he was now safe at home.

March 29

SHOTS FIRED, Canon Dr.

One report of possible shots fired in Tilden Park. No merit. Regional Park Police advised.

March 30

DISTURBANCE, Kingston Rd.

Report of car alarm sounding. All quiet upon arrival.

DISTURBANCE, Kingston Rd.

Report of car alarm sounding. Mechanic picked up vehicle for diagnostic.

The GRUBB Co.

REALTORS



KENSINGTON

REAL ESTATE MARKET

SNAPSHOT

2/1/2016 to 4/8/16

5 Available Listings

- Average list price: \$588 per sq. ft.
- Average days on the market: 4

4 Pending Listings

- Average list price: \$560 per sq. ft.
- Average days on the market: 15

2 Sold

- Average list price - Low: \$253 per sq. ft.
- Average list price - High: \$463 per sq. ft.
- Average sold price - Low: \$252 per sq. ft.
- Average sold price - High: \$531 per sq. ft.
- Average days on the market: 14

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Based on information from the East Bay Regional MLS as of October 1st, 2015. All data, including all measurements and calculations of area, is obtained from various sources and has not been, and will not be, verified by broker or MLS. All information should be independently reviewed and verified for accuracy. Properties may or may not be listed by the office/agent presenting the information.



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Religious Education Classes at 11

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Pet Taxi

Neighborhood Notes

Plan to Create Defensible Space in El Cerrito and Kensington Gears Up for Wildfire Season

As April rains slow, it's time to prepare for wildfires. Help develop a community wildfire protection plan for El Cerrito and Kensington. We want your input on wildfire risks and hazards. Share your concerns and knowledge. All Kensington residents can participate in our short survey at fluidsurveys.com/s/El_Cerrito-Kensington_wildfire_recommendations/, take part in a workshop, or visit our website www.diablofiresafe.org/El-Cerrito-Kensington-CWPP-AP.html for the latest updates. Be sure to look for us at community events.

Or perhaps you're ready for a cost-share project? Up to \$5,000 per project is available to groups or groups of individuals to hire a contractor to reduce fuel loads and create defensible space on your properties. Download an application at www.diablofiresafe.org/pdf/Cost-Share_2015-16_application_package.pdf

A Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) is a collaboratively developed plan that identifies wildland fire hazards, prioritizes way to reduce those hazards and recommends measures for homeowners and communities to reduce structure ignitability. The Diablo Fire Safe Council is working with the El Cerrito Fire Department, Kensington Fire Protection District, homeowner groups, and others to develop such a plan for the communities of El Cerrito and Kensington. For more information contact Cheryl Miller, (510) 282-1265 or DFSCMiller@com-cast.net

Let Your Fingers Do the Talking

Imagine it's late at night. You hear someone slinking quietly in your backyard. You creep out of bed and head to the dark window, where you spot a sudden beam of yellow that could be a penlight. You pick up your cell before you remember that you live in one of Kensington's dead zones—your phone works great so long as you stand hunched over, facing west, in front of your next-door neighbor's garage door.

Never fear. All you need do is text 911. "It's best," says Interim Chief of Police Kevin Hart, "if you type in your address as well, but there is GPS capability." Hart says that dispatchers prefer that people call 911 rather than text, but there may be reasons that you need to text. "You've fallen, for instance," says Hart, "and you can't speak. It's another tool to request assistance."

The capability to text 911 has been in operation since the end of January. The dispatcher will ask questions, just as if you'd placed a voice call. According to the department's press release, you type in 911 where you would normally put a number to send a text message. In the message itself, type in the location where you need help. An operator will soon be with you. —Linnea Due

Keep the Tradition Alive

All graduating high school seniors: come for pizza and a photo in the *Outlook* you'll treasure forever. Don't miss out. Head up to the KCC office in Kensington park Sunday, May 1, at 3:30pm. If you attended Hilltop Elementary School; ever lived in or now live in Kensington, we want your photo. The group shot is published in the *Outlook's* June issue together with information about the college you plan to attend in the fall. Free food, free fun!



Photo by Marion Henon

Summer Solstice Celebration

Come celebrate Father's Day and the Summer Solstice at the Kensington Community Center. The Kensington Community Council (KCC) is sponsoring its first ever Summer Solstice Celebration at the center on Sunday, June 19. Bring a picnic dinner and enjoy BBQ chicken from our new community grill. Sing along with live music to serenade the sun as it slowly sinks behind the Golden Gate Bridge. Enjoy face painting for the kids and a light show at sunset. Be sure to save the date!



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The Friends of the Kensington Library Spring Book Sale will be held Saturday, May 7, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. and Sunday, May 8, 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. in the Kensington Community Center (aka Youth Hut) at 59 Arlington Avenue, in Kensington.

You will find well-stocked tables organized topically for easy viewing. Rare, first editions, signed books, and more can be found at the "Special Selections Table."



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